

News Release

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MOTORISTS URGED TO WATCH FOR CYCLISTS

February 2007 - Cyclist safety coupled with Houston motorist awareness is the focus of a new safety campaign aimed at reducing injuries for bike riders. The City of Houston will launch a new initiative on **Tuesday, February 6, 2007 on the steps of City Hall at 11 a.m.** geared toward educating motorists on ways to share the road through the **“Watch For Cyclists!”** campaign.

Between 1998 and 2000, 28% of Texas bicycle crashes occurred in the Houston region. Almost 2% were fatalities. The city of Houston accounted for 56% of the crashes in this period of time. Among the principal causes for these incidents are: speeding, failing to yield, failing to stop and DUI, this according to data compiled by the Houston Galveston Area Council.

The *Watch For Cyclists!* Campaign is an educational effort created to familiarize drivers with 10 basic tips to sharing the roadway with cyclists. “If you are an avid cycling commuter or have kids who ride their bikes to and from school or just in the neighborhood, you want motorists to be alert while they drive throughout the city,” said Lilibeth André, City of Houston Bikeway Program Coordinator, “These tips teach you what to watch for.” Houston City Council Member Carol Alvarado, an avid cyclist herself, supports this effort and believes it is an important step in giving the sport of cycling an opportunity to grow in popularity. “The City of Houston is a bicycle-friendly city, but we are ready to take it to the next level. Knowing what to expect on the road is important. That’s why we have developed the Top 10 Tips to “Watch for Cyclists” by modeling positive cyclist and motorist behavior.”

The City of Houston Bikeway Program, partnered with AAA Texas and REI, demonstrates the commitment from public and private organizations for creating a more bicycle-friendly Houston, “Our partnership with the City of Houston shows a commitment to improving safety between motorists and cyclists,” said Mark Bell, general manager for AAA Texas. “We believe this partnership will help educate motorists and cyclists about the importance of sharing the roads safely and help save lives.”

The campaign is also tied to two other major biking events which are the Tour de Houston ride on March 17, the MS-150 ride to Austin on April 21 and 22, and recognition of Bike Month in May.

“REI is committed to inspiring, educating, and outfitting the Houston community for a lifetime in the outdoors,” said Jennifer Hill, Westheimer Store Manager. “For the “Watch for Cyclists” Campaign, REI is sponsoring a bumper sticker to raise funds for the Houston Bikeway Program. This partnership promotes REI’s support for both outdoor recreation in the form of cycling and environmentally friendly transportation.”

For more information, visit www.houstonbikeways.org or contact the Houston Bikeway Program at (713) 837-0003.